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CLACKAMAS COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

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Office of
RIS BRADSHAW, SHERIFF
CLACKAMAS COUNTY

06/27/94

The Honorable Reed E. Hundt
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Sir,

As a Jail Administrator I am writing you about my concerns with regards to Billed Party Preference call routing.

As a Jail Administrator I also need to have some control over the inmates use and access to telephone service. Three areas that justify this control are safety, security and rehabilitation. I receive at least one call a day from the public requesting to have their numbers blocked to prevent inmates from calling them and threatening and harassing them. We have even caught convicted sex offenders making obscene phone calls to their victims and total strangers. Even with phone blocking the inmates figured out how they could call through a third party and continue to harass the victim, witness, judge, jury member, etc. With our new dedicated system we can also prevent inmates from calling through a third party, thus preventing the harassment and fraud that inmates have become successful at.

Having a dedicated service provider for inmate phone service at our Jail limits the amount of time I have to spend tracking down complaints and misuse of the phones by inmates. I have almost daily contact with our present provider for which he gives me reports and blocks numbers. Having a dedicated provider means, one phone call, one person to contact. The hardware and software to run the phone system is provided by the vendor with no cost to our Jail besides giving us commissions.

Our Jail is funded from a serial levy that is voted on every three years by the public. If we had to include in the levy, funding for inmate programs it could jeopardize its passage. The public is very strong minded when it comes to giving inmates anything that resembles a luxury, or benefit. Our inmate phone commissions assist in purchasing cable TV for the inmates, which is one of the best inmate management tools going in the corrections field.

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PAT DETLOFF
Chief Deputy

R.W. BAKER
First Sergeant

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
THOMAS J. HARRIS
SECRETARY

Other programs that are supported by the phone commissions are daily newspapers, magazines, recreation equipment, law books, bibles, religious materials, hygiene items and postage for indigent inmates and special meals during the holidays. These things for the most part are mandated, and allow us to better manage the Jail without putting an additional burden on the taxpayers of our county to fund them.

Before independent inmate phone providers came along, giving inmates access to the phones was a labor intensive, unsafe and costly proposition. I would oppose any effort that restricts my ability to provide our inmates with an effective phone system that funds important inmate programs. At a time when the taxpayers want their government to cut spending, it would not make sense to see a program that is successful and generates funding for meaningful inmate programs eliminated.

One of the requirements when we put our inmate phone system out to bid was to prevent our provider from overcharging the inmates family and friends in order to provide us with higher commissions. We would rather see a smaller commission check than gouge the family and friends of the inmate. It does not cost the person accepting the call anymore than if they were accepting a collect call from someone using an ordinary pay phone. I would oppose any federal effort that would relieve me of my responsibility over the welfare of our inmates, and that would be a more complex and costly way of handling rate monitoring.

Thank you for your consideration,

Ris Bradshaw, Sheriff


By Warner Johnson, Lieutenant